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The Conspiracy Against Growing Up

BY FREDERICK M. MEEK

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. Luke 2:52.

When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. I Corinthians 13:11.

CHRISTMAS—1938 model—provides an interlude in the course of the year when the harsher features of life disappear into the background or else are hidden behind the festive trappings of the season. There is good cheer and well-wishing; there is jovial fellowship and hearty handshaking; there is thoughtfulness and generosity. Human nature touches the year's "high" in kindliness and sympathy. For a few days at least we live in a different atmosphere.

The upsurge of this spirit has an accompaniment of icicles and tinsel, of wreaths and holly, all carried on the shoulders of red-coated Santa Clauses, who are followed by crowds of adulating people. But when Christmas has passed and we look across at the figure of the red-coated Santa Claus around which we have been gathered, we have the appalling realization that what we had taken for the light of life in its eyes, is only the reflection of artificial lighting; that the handclasp was somehow mechanically animated; that the glow in its cheeks was artificially imposed; that the face was a mask behind which there was no life. Such is the experience of many after the season is over. People come up to the day eager, busy, animated. After it has passed there remains a disillusioned experience out of which they say: "So what! Is that all?" The day itself is almost an anticlimax; and if we could pile up the disappointed, weary feelings of multitudes they would reach to high heaven.

The reason for this is simple. The emotions of a more kindly spirit, the feelings which prompt the giving of gifts and charities, are not in themselves life-

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giving or self-sustaining. They are not in touch with an abounding source of life and vitality. So much of our Christmas practice is cut off from the replenishing source of its true vigor and strength. Last Christmas I came across this paragraph: "Shopping in these turbulent days, we saw a little boy put his hand inquiringly on a ten-cent Christ child, part of a crèche. 'What is this?' he asked his mother, who had him by the hand. 'C'mon, c'mon,' replied the harassed woman. 'You don't want that!' She dragged him grimly away—a department-store madonna, her mind dark with gift-thoughts, following a star of her own devising." There was the boy with his hand on the Christ child; and the mother's comment was, "C'mon, you don't want that!" According to her own point of view the mother was right. The lad was introducing a different and quite extraneous element. That mother's reply differs not one whit from the attitude of much of our surrounding life. We are almost ashamed to speak of the Christ child in connection with many of our Christmas observances and Christmas sentiments.

Our world forgets him and the fact that Christmas stems from an event that happened in the Judean hills. It is no wonder that people are disillusioned and tired and weary. They have separated themselves from the spring of Christmas' vitality, so that the common pervasive spirit at this season is frequently not that of Christmas, but rather that of yuletide, the old Norse festival, slightly modified by a nominally Christian society.

But we *Christian* people—what of us? We Christian people can never allow ourselves to forget that Christmas is primarily a religious festival. It is the occasion when we remember the birth of a child to a carpenter and his wife, the birth of Jesus to Joseph and Mary. But we Christian people also have been failing to find in the day what we should. And it is with this fact that I am concerned this morning.

EMPTY TRIBUTES

Over many generations we have brought a magnificent tribute in worship to the child, through story, song and picture. We have been strongly drawn by the power of those narrative stories in Matthew and Luke which tell of the birth of the child. And at the Christmas season we gather in adoration about the cradle at Bethlehem. Many of us find here, as we should, the animating spirit for Christmas deeds of love and good will. And year by year it seems to us that these lines of the poet are true:

> Lo, he is born again in a dark manger!
> Again he is sleeping on the dusty hay;
> And again the world grown luminous with star-shine
> And softly fragrant. . . .

As we bring our adoration to the manger, we sing, "Oh come, let us adore him!" Carols echo from church to church around the world as Christians bow before the newborn child. This is the occasion when we Christian people bring a full measure of devotion into the sanctuary.

But there is nothing that would be more startling and even humiliating than that in the midst of our Christmas adoration the child should appear in our midst, full-grown and matured into manhood, and say: "You give me this adoration. Let me take you at your word. Come and companion with me!" I know of no greater tragedy than the fact that these words would produce utter amazement and confusion. We Christian people have taken toward the child of Bethlehem the misguided attitude that many adults assume toward children in general. How often parents say of their children, "Oh, I wish that they would always remain small, for they are so lovable then!" Such an attitude followed to its logical conclusion would deny the child a chance to fulfill his destiny, to grow into adulthood and maturity. Always when a child grows up a new set of personal relationships is involved. For there is a great difference between dealing with an infant and dealing with a child grown to manhood. The quality of an individual's personality can usually be determined by how he treats the child as he grows and matures, and by what he hopes for the child in that adult future.

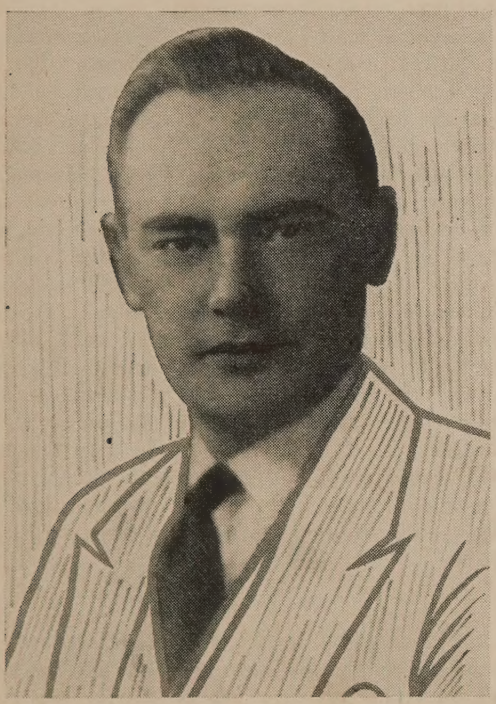
PERMANENT SWADDLING CLOTHES A MOCKERY

A recent magazine had a cartoon picturing an adult man seated on the knee of a department-store Santa Claus while a group of gaping children stood around. The complacent, doting parents are saying to a friend, "It has been such a struggle, but we have managed to keep alive his belief." That attitude of refusing to allow mature development to come normally and naturally has a fair parallel in the attitude that Christian people have often assumed toward the Bethlehem child in the cradle. There are many people who adore the Christ child but who would never stop to recognize the Christ grown to maturity as a man. Religiously, they are content to keep the Christmas child in swaddling clothes all their lives—and all his life.

If it were only that a child had been born there would be no Christmas in 1938. The great thing about the occasion that Christmas celebrates is that the child who was born in the stable lived a normal life, and as Luke tells us he "increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." He grew up and became an adult. It was as an adult that he lived the life which altered history and which should be for the encouragement of us all. Therefore fundamental to any Christmas celebration is the fact that the child became the man whose life story is in our Gospels. His influence and our greatest impetus to the Christian faith spring directly from his adult life. And while at Christmas we may grow kindly as we gather about the cradle, the helpless spirit of infancy was not the source of Jesus' influence. The great leader, the valiant crusader, the bearer of burdens, the giver of his life—all these are of the man. So while at Christmas we remember the beginning of the life, let us not forget to celebrate the greater thing which is the continuation and the well wrought conclusion of that life.

The Christmas child does not even speak our language; he does not disturb the deep springs of our motives. But when he becomes a man he says: "Follow

me." "Blessed are the peacemakers." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Inasmuch as ye have done to one of these my brethren ye have done unto me." "Blessed are the pure in heart." "Go and sin no more." "Father, forgive them." These are life-changing words. They do not belong to the innocency of infancy. They are the keen insights of complete maturity. Many would that they might never hear them, coming as they do from the man. Rather they would only see the vague winsome smile of the child, a lovely child, whose inarticulate sounds tug at every human heart. As a man, walking about in our busy marts of commerce, frequenting the legislative assemblies and committee rooms



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where national policies and international relations are decided, he is often an unwelcome companion, whose right of admittance is even questioned. We have adoration for the child and we lend an ear that we may hear "the herald angels sing." But meanwhile we neglect with blatant assurance the Sermon on the Mount, which is the distilled wisdom of the man after he had come to maturity.

There are people in our day who say that we have outgrown Jesus. But if we know him as a man on our streets, talking to us as an equal about how we live and do business, about how we govern the nation and live in a complex interdependent world, we realize that we have never outgrown him.

Our society balks at following the man even though it is willing to commercialize the child's birth. There is a conspiracy against his growing up and coming to a man's estate amongst us. That is the last thing in the universe that this world of ours wants. It knows too well the truth of what Whitehead says, that if we took this man at his word, this life of ours would be unrecognizable in a fortnight. Moreover, the world about us does not want you and me to grow up and come to the maturity of an adult Christian life. It wants our Christian living to remain on the child level, without any initiation into the mysteries of the adult world where we do our business and carry on our concerns of living—where, it is said, "children—Christian children—should be seen and not heard."

LET US TAKE CHRIST AT HIS WORD

Against the background of wise men and shepherds, of traditional angelic songs, of a child born in a primitive cattle stable, let us remember these two sentences from our New Testament: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

This morning as we anticipate Christmas I plead that our attitude may bring no arrested development to the child; that there may be a willingness on our part—no, a desire—to have this child come to maturity in our lives and in the midst of our society. Wherever he has had the chance to enter into a man's estate, his insight, his mental power, his capacity for leadership, his great strength, his inspiration, have surpassed those of all the sons of man.

A friend told me that some years ago he saw two advertisements next to each other in the "help wanted" column in the *New York World*. The advertisements were these: "Wanted—a man to impersonate Santa Claus." "Wanted—a man for a blood transfusion." These two advertisements give point to what we have been saying this morning. They represent the two elements in Christmas. The first advertisement is one that we can understand. At Christmas time we like the romance and sentiment of Santa Claus. Indeed we are all anxious to play his role. Thank God for the number of Santa Clauses that have brought and will bring cheer to many a downcast person and many a bare home. Let us keep the good practice! But that is not enough.

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW

The world stands in need of something far more fundamental than a Christmas dinner and a Christmas stocking. This world of ours is ill—desperately ill. More than anything else it needs a blood transfusion—a blood transfusion from the vigorous life of the Man of Nazareth, particularly after it has been trying to commit suicide with wars, and ill regulated, wasteful commercial strife, and racial conflicts and social struggles. Blood transfusions must come from the Man of Nazareth, not from the babe in the cradle. And our world needs, too, blood transfusions from the followers of the Man, followers who are full-grown mature Christian individuals, and not children of the faith still carried in arms. But as long as our society keeps the child in the Bethlehem cradle, as long as we deny the babe a chance to grow to maturity, as long as we remain children in arms in the faith ourselves, just so

long will there be no healing, no final recovery from the ills that beset us and our world.

While at the Christmas season we may bring our adoration to the Babe of Bethlehem, let us never forget that that adoration is as nothing unless we bring a full measure of service to the Man whom we call Christ.

The Song of the Angels

By Harold E. Carlson

THE Gospel of Luke has truly been called "the most beautiful book ever written." And the Christmas narrative of the story of the angels is the most charming portion of that work. The literary beauty of the book, however, is not at the cost of historical fact. Sir William Ramsey, the renowned archaeologist and biblical scholar, has said that he regards Luke as the greatest historian who has ever lived, excepting only Thucydides. He discovered after painstaking research that topographical statements of Luke about locations of villages, cities and streams were absolutely reliable.

A LITERARY CLASSIC

The Gospel of Luke is written with the background of historical feeling. We could not even guess from Matthew, Mark or John when Jesus was born, why his birth took place in Bethlehem, or when he began his ministry. But these historical facts are given us by Luke. And so important are they that some scholars believe the loss of the Gospel of Luke would impoverish civilization more than the loss of any other historical writing.

Yet, paradoxical as it may seem, it is the historian Luke who gives us the charming narrative of the nativity in poetical beauty. Besides being a trustworthy historian, Luke is also a poet of the first order. The Song of the Angels is poetry in the highest and fullest sense. It is the most beautiful story in all literature. And most of the living Christmas stories have in all probability derived their inspiration from the Song of the Angels by Luke.

Much of the inspiration of this poetic jewel lies in the fact that it is immortal sacred music. Besides being an historian and a poet, Luke was also an accomplished musician. He had learned music, which was universal in Greek education. Five Latin hymns by which the church throughout the centuries has been immeasurably enriched were heralded by Luke: "Ave Maria," "Magnificat," "Nunc Dimittis," "Benedicta" and "Gloria in Excelsis"—the Song of the Angels.

HISTORY AND POETRY BLEND

No small degree of the charm pervading the Christmas season is to be traced to the Christmas story by Luke because of its harmonious blending of historical fact and poetic beauty. Our age needs less explanation and more appreciation. There is something in the very nature of the soul that gives ready allegiance to historical fact when it is bathed in the glow of the divine and supernatural. Our lives demand an ideal which the facts of life perpetually deny us.

Now Luke does not claim to have been an eyewitness of the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks on that memorable night. He does not claim to have heard the Song of the Angels. There is no awkward attempt to present details with the purpose of creating an impression of realism. The inference is to be drawn, however, that he used a written source on the nativity which had been made before him and which he had carefully investigated. It is probable that he had conversed with those who had first heard the story of the shepherds. The Song of the Angels is therefore a record of personal experience.

It is not difficult to outline a theory accounting for the spiritual experience of the shepherds. The song these shepherds heard indicates their character and gives us insight into the soul of their age. Since they were intensely religious men having a childlike belief in angels which they conceived as God's messengers to humanity, it is obvious that such a spiritual experience as theirs, related in Luke's story of the nativity, was a natural phenomenon. Hope ran high in the days before the birth of Jesus that a Messiah would soon appear and restore again the Kingdom of Israel. Two common expectations of the Messiah were held. The one was that he was to be a second Solomon in all his glory, and the other that he was to be a superhuman being, God's representative among men. Against such a religiously expectant background shepherds in the proper mood would need only some sensory stimulation of light and sound—a star in the east and breeze or bells—as the strong foundation for their spiritual experience.

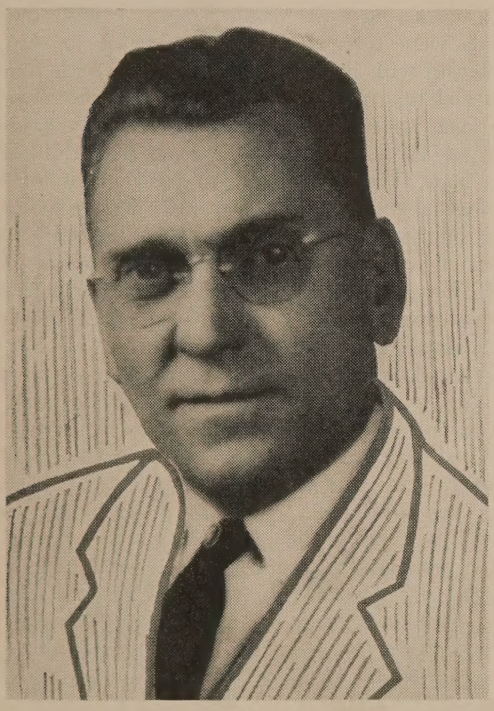
SONG OF THE SOUL

Not all music is vocal. Many songs are heard, not by the ear, but by the soul. Henry Ward Beecher, in tune with God in nature, spoke of "the honeysuckle murmuring, the violet whispering, and the rose singing each its individual song." We hear spiritually just as we see spiritually. The humble shepherds of long ago, in tune with God in their hearts, heard the Song of the Angels—"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men of good will." It was a song in the universal language of God to souls of men who were not too dulled by the noise of the world. Every time God reveals himself to men it is a song of the depth and meaning of life, and of the lifting of the veil, as it were, to grant to their spiritual eyes a glimpse of awaiting glory.

No wonder there was light in the darkness for the shepherds! It was "the glory of the Lord." They had been given a foretaste of heaven. The depths of their being had been touched by God and the glory of heaven flashed in upon their souls. What heaven is like must be left until we know. But here were souls whose eyes saw so clearly the spiritual in the material, and the meaning of the human, that it was to them the glory of the Lord. As Borden P. Bowne has pointed out, it is not so strange that shepherds should see lights

and hear voices, but that such lights and such voices combined into such a vision and such a song. In a very real sense God was making heaven visible and articulate to mortal men.

The song is neither a mere ascription of praise to God nor a mere proclamation of God's good will to men. The words are freighted with divinity. The ascription, "Glory to God in the highest," finds its deep significance in the words: "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people for there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Here is set forth in poetic beauty



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of human expression the heavenly joy born of the serene faith that the divine had entered into the stream of humanity. It is natural and spontaneous expression of praise and thanks to God from human hearts given the wings of angelic song. The surprising fact of this ascription is that it makes articulate the faith of the shepherds that the Messiah was to be not so much King of the Jews as Savior of all men. As the centuries come and pass the verdict of Ernest Renan takes on continually increasing significance: "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed."

PROCLAIMING A COSMIC FACT

As the song is clearly enough not simply an ordinary doxology, neither is it merely a proclamation of God's good will to men. To men of faith and angelic thought no such proclamation was needed. But here is a proclamation of overpowering faith that God had manifested himself in humanity as the Eternal in time who offered heaven on earth to men who found his favor. The mastering faith that men could make their wills holy and enjoy a heaven on earth was a new song from heaven.

The song was to the shepherds an angelic proclamation of a cosmic fact. It is the essence of this proclamation on which men feed their souls in the holy hope of "that far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves." This divine hunger in men's hearts for a heavenly ideal on earth is warp and woof of human souls. Men are born with this sacred hope. Yet it too often seems only an empty dream that a God who holds in his hand the milky way takes note of the doings of individual men. What is man among millions of universes? Is he only one of fifteen hundred million tiny insects of one universe?

Supported by the testimony of leading scientists, Beverley Nichols has recently set forth in persuasive way that this earth has been chosen out of the infinite number of millions for a unique and particular purpose. He quotes Sir Ambrose Fleming to the effect that there is a strong reason for believing that our earth "is very rare, if not unique, in the universe, and the nature and conditions of our earth unique amidst that uniqueness." And no less an authority than Sir Arthur Thomson says: "There is something awesome in the apparent uniqueness of our earth."

If our earth is but an infinitely small creation it appears to have an infinitely important place in creation. Who shall say that a natural phenomenon of human experience may not have a cosmic significance? History bears witness that age on age has been lifted to higher moral planes by individuals of angelic thought who made their ideals the songs of hope and faith of a few followers. The more angelic the hearts and minds of men of an age, the nearer to heaven on earth have they come.

THE GREAT DREAM

Peace is the fruit of good will. It is the glory of God among men. Peace on earth belongs to men, not of selfishness, hatred and injustice, but of good will. But in our world today, blinded by selfishness, poisoned by hate, and pervaded by injustice, how hopeless seems the dream of peace on earth! Yet men of humble shepherd hearts still sing, "Glory to God in the highest." For theirs is the faith that the task is not in vain since the Infinite is toiling with men to create a world of good will. They have learned that the love in which God clothed himself in the human is healing for all injustice, hatred and selfishness. They glance at history and see the road, rough and rugged, sometimes going down, but all the way almost imperceptibly, always leading up and on toward something to come vastly nobler and better.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

That Glorious Song of Old—Mockery or Prophecy?

By Henry Kendall Booth

Peace on earth among men of goodwill. Luke 8:14.

WE COME again as a congregation this morning to what we all agree is the most beautiful day of the year, a day into which we have put so much of romance and of color, of charm and of beauty that it stands out as a day by itself. No matter how hard our lives have been, no matter how difficult, no matter how much of perplexity and distress they have brought, somehow Christmas when it comes back carries a note of joy.

It is not strange that we meet here this morning, in common with millions of Christian folk the world over, to celebrate the coming of the Christmastide. Into it have been woven a whole group of colorful customs that we have culled from many sources. It seems as though there is no day into which there has been wrought so much of beauty as Christmas. And the central activity of this season, as we are well aware, is that custom (whose origin we do not know) of giving gifts to each other, given as they are with love, as the expression of our affection for others, as tokens of our friendship, of the ties that bind us together in human relationships. There is value in the custom. With all that has come of commercialism to make it sometimes seem sordid, yet we could not dispense with what this giving of gifts means not only to the children who look forward to it with such anticipation, but in the opportunity it gives all of us to tell those who are about us that we love them, and by the fact that we have worked hard and long to find some gift that we feel may bring them happiness to reveal to them how deep and how sincere is our love for them.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

An ethereal charm dwells about Christmastide, with the holly and the mistletoe and the Christmas trees, the vivid colors, the singing of songs, the chanting of carols. One could go on indefinitely to describe the romance and charm of this Christmas celebration that has grown up through the years.

But most of all, as the world turns back its thought at this Christmas season to the first Christmas, one finds woven into it star-shine and stable straw, the strangest combination of beauty and of sordidness. There is something about Christmas as it is told in that gospel story, whose poetry we cannot escape. Those shepherds as they come into the fields at night and hear the song of the angels and hurry to Bethlehem to see the babe; those wise men in their rich garments on their careening camels crossing sea and land to find at last the end of their journey at Bethlehem; that star that shone out in the east to guide their footsteps at last to this particular place—no one can begin to tell how much those symbols, if they be nothing more than symbols, have meant to the world. Most beautiful and most wonderful of all that the first Christmas gathers into itself, I think we will agree, is the fact that as the shepherds that night were watching their flocks, they heard echoes of an angelic choir. And the refrain of that choir is sounding over the world tonight: Peace on earth, good will among men.

MOCKING THE ANGELS' SONG

We have gathered here this morning and have sung an old Christmas song we have sung a thousand times, with its refrain—"Till the whole world gives back the song which now the angels sing." I wish that the words were true. I dislike very much to turn this gathering with its happiness and peace, with the comfort and beauty that we have here and the melody of the songs we have sung, away from dreams to reality. But we are a thousand miles from the fulfillment of that hope. I am afraid that to a good many of us, as we look out over the world in which we are living, this song of the angels sounds like bitter mockery. With blatant Hitler and cynical Mussolini and ruthless Stalin and Franco "the butcher" stalking like primeval beasts through the world, it does not seem much like "peace on earth and good will to men" today.

What does it really mean? For the mood in which we gather this morning, if we are honest with ourselves, is not a mood of complacency, it cannot be a mood of very great joy. Look out over the world and what do you see that gives you any hope of that angel song being fulfilled? How much after all does it mean? Is it just an idle dream? Is it a myth conjured out of nothingness? Is it a hope and nothing more than a hope? Why was it sung at all? Why does that echo come back to us again and again every Christmas day? Why are we, as we gather here, confronted by that strange song out of heaven, "Peace on earth," with the whole world arming to the teeth, with every nation, our own included, getting ready for battle? Peace on earth —how strange it sounds!

RECALLING AN OLD DREAM

And yet once before we felt much the same, for I know all the older people in this room can recall that there was an hour in which we felt as we do this morning, when we gathered in this church on Christmas Day of 1917. I well recall that there was not great jubilation in our hearts. Our boys were over in the trenches in France. Some of them out of this church and community had already been killed. We knew that more were to be laid a sacrifice on the altar of Mars. Our hearts were anxious for those lads that had gone out from our own homes and community into that conflict. So as we listened to the thunder of those guns that shook the whole world we felt very much as we do this morning: we tried to capture the Christmas spirit and failed, we wished to have something of the Christmas joy and it was not easy. And in that hour I find that a poet soul wrote a bit of verse which somehow to my mind expresses very much the mood in which we gather this morning:

Is it a mocking jest that Christmas bells
Chime in this tragic hour of strife and pain,
That in the misery of conflicting wills
Breathless, men whisper words of love again?

Is it a jest that Europe's stainless snows
In beauty mask her burning, bleeding scars,
Where man's blaspheming thunder comes and goes?—
Is this unholiest his last of wars?

Is this the freedom that we bought so dear—
To live among the wolf-pack in a cage,
Spurred by a Sycorax to hate and fear—
Ingenious brutes that cower and kill and rage?

Have we no further end, no nobler plan,
No subtler vision and no bolder will?
Is this the creature that we call a man?
Is this the jungle that we live in still?

Be dumb! ye bells, nor wake the frosty air
With joyful clamor while the nations bleed;
Let sorrow's silence speak a people's prayer
Whose legioned sons lie crucified by greed.

Be dumb, sweet bells; or ring more wild and clear,
Proclaim a sunrise on youth's Calvary!
Ring out the madness with the dying year,
Let nations pass so Man himself be free.

Is not that the mood in which we have come together this morning, wondering if these Christmas bells are not a mockery?

PAYING WAR'S PRICE—FOR WHAT?

And yet you and I had one ray amid the darkness of 1917 in our hearts, one thing that cheered us then that is now gone, and that was the assurance of the righteousness of that war, for we believed we were fighting to end tyranny, to bring a just peace, and to end all war forever. That was the dream in our hearts. That was the force that nerved us and cheered us on. We felt that somehow all this misery was after all the price we were paying for something that lay ahead, a sacrifice we were offering on the altar, that out of our tears and blood and sorrow there might come a new world. Men were dreaming that then, and were saying it then. For I find that much of the best poetry of that hour very clearly sets that idea forth:

What can be worth this cost of gold and tears,
These lands laid desolate with fire and blood,
This ruin past the mending of our years,
These generations blighted in the bud?
To seek until we find reality;
To know ourselves, our brothers, and our Lord;
In our own hearts to feel the searching sword
That kills the false however dear it be.
O God! give us to know
The holy heart of suffering, and kneel
To give Thee solemn thanks that we can feel
A little of the pain that these have borne
Who for Thy sake the crown of thorns have worn!

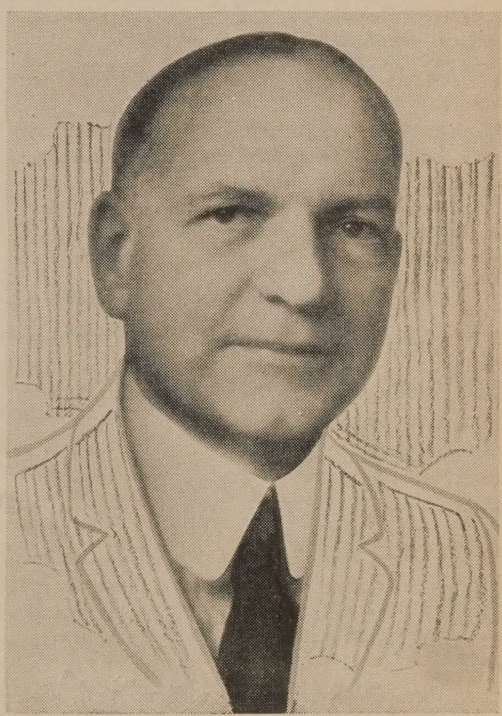
* * * * *

Help us to do our part;
And to the children of a brighter day
Give an enduring peace that shall not stray
From Thy dear law of Love, whate'er befall—
God, that were worth it all.

That is one of the noblest poems that came out of that era.

As you recall your attitude of mind in that dark hour you agree that it reflected clearly your point of view. You knew that all was not right with the world. You knew that nations were being reduced to ruins, you knew that millions of men were dying on the field of battle, but you felt that through it all and out of it a new world was coming. "God, that were worth it all."

Yes, it would have been worth it all—all the sacrifice, all the pain, all the bloodshed, all the loss. And out of it came what? That iniquitous treaty of Versailles. The jockeying of nations with each other for place.



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That revelation of the cynical attitude of Europe which comes to us out of recent research, written so that he who runs may read, that the Allies were working and planning with each other to divide up the loot after the war was over. We innocent Americans, far removed from the causes of conflict, knowing nothing of the devious diplomacy and the secret pacts and treaties, knowing nothing of how these gentlemen's agreements were made to make profit out of the war for the nations that should win, we went in believing that we were "making the world safe for democracy," and fighting a "war to end war."

THE MOOD OF DESPAIR

I am afraid that we must admit that today we are disillusioned. We certainly know that the war that is now going on (whether it be called war or not) in Spain and in China, is anything but holy. There is no possible way that anyone can interpret it as other than

a lust for power expressing itself in the outreach of armed force.

So I wonder if we do not find it very hard this Christmas Day to keep from the feeling of despair of any real peace. Somehow the words of Studdert-Kennedy, that flaming prophet who died because he served his fellow men too well, and who himself was a soldier in the trenches and came back to write his blazing lines —his words search us through and through as we gather here this morning. They echo the mood in which we meet:

Is it a dream—and nothing more—this faith
That nerves our brains to thought—our hands to work
For that great day when wars shall cease, and men
Shall live as brothers in a unity
Of love—live in a world made splendid?

Is it a dream—this faith of ours—that pleads
And pulses in our hearts—and bids us look,
Through mists of tears and time, to that great day
When wars shall cease upon the earth, and men
As brothers bound by Love of Man and God,
Shall build a world as gloriously fair
As sunset skies, or mountains when they catch
The farewell kiss of evening on their heights?

STILL MUST WE CHERISH THE DREAM!

Is it a dream? Then how shall we approach this Christmas of 1938? I have not come before you with the glamor and beauty and charm of Christmas on my lips this year because I cannot feel it in my heart. I am sorrowful for my fellow men. My heart is pained and anguished as is yours by what we read each day of what is going on across the seas, as we see that unleashed spirit of hate and greed that is stalking the world. It makes a mockery of our Christian professions. It makes Christmas seem indeed an anomaly as it comes back. When we talk about "peace on earth and good will to men" and echo the angel's song, how strange it sounds!

How, then, shall we face this day? Well, with two truths in our hearts that we may lay hold upon for our comfort. First of all, with the realization that the angel song is not a mockery of our hopes or our dreams, but a challenge to us to hold them fast. It sounded just as strange, my friends, to that hard old Roman world to which those words first came. For it was a world of hate, a world of conflict, a world of strife, a world in which the common man was beaten down, in which the mighty of the earth stalked across the world as they do today, a time in which ruthless dictators were in power; for a Caesar sat on the throne with a rule of absolute tyranny, a time of hardship for the common man, of difficulty and need, of struggle and pain. To such a world as that first came that message.

It sounds equally strange today, but the song still haunts us. We cannot escape it. In our best moments it comes back to us. Once a year it catches up with us, and we hear the angels sing today no matter where we are, even in the market place or amid the crash of the battlefield.

Yet the real desire of the heart of mankind finds expression in that song. The best that humanity can hope for, what the heart of the masses of men longs after, is gathered up in that angel song, "Peace on earth." How the masses of men long for it! How the crushed heart of the world cries out in pain for it! We have been thrust into our wars, as we are becoming increasingly aware today, by our rulers, our war lords, our diplomats, our supposed ministers of state. The people have not wanted war, nor do they today. The people of Japan are not behind this Japanese invasion of China, any more than the people of Germany were behind that mad war of the military group in 1914. The people of Italy were by no means behind Mussolini in his invasion of Ethiopia.

THE LONGING IN HUMANITY'S HEART

Somehow the heart of man is longing with a desperate longing for that peace about which the angels sang. Let us not forget that no matter what happens the heart of mankind is sound, the mind of the masses of the people is sincere. They are powerless today, for unfortunately too often they have allowed the power that they ought to have for themselves, to slip into the hands of dictators in many countries who will decide this question for themselves and not for the people. But I say to you that the angel song that haunts us yet is a challenge to us all to believe in spite of all that may be said, in spite of the wars that are now racking the world's peace, that those wars do not come out of the heart of a humanity that has turned back to the jungles in its thought. They are not the expression of the ravening blood lust of men, because there is no such thing. Men must be forced to fight these battles. They are not choosing war of their own accord. And since the spirit of Christ has laid hold on human hearts in these centuries the masses are reluctant to spill each other's blood, they draw back with horror from that thing that we call war.

There are certain plain facts which rise up to give us heart to believe, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, and to keep our faith in the coming of a day of peace.

LET WAR NO MORE BE BLESSED!

And the first one is this, that whatever happens in the days that lie ahead, no matter what may take place at Washington or Paris or Berlin or Rome, we shall never again bless war as holy. We may be forced to go to war against our will, we may consent to it because we cannot do anything else, but I do not believe that Christianity will ever be invoked again to bless another war. I doubt very much if Christian people the world over are in any mood to say to any war lord or war maker, "Go forward, and may the living, loving Christ go with you." We put Christ in khaki in the World War, we took him down into the trenches, we prayed that unholy prayer all the nations that called themselves Christian were praying for victory, and believed that he was aiding our soldiers to plunge their bayonets into somebody else's body. But I do not think we believe that any more. One thing at least has taken place in these years that followed on that awful World War that plunged the world into such agony: we have become more and more convinced that war is not only

unchristian and unholy, but we are more and more thinking that it is unnecessary. And we find that the opposition to war is on the increase. More and more people are hating it. More and more people are refusing to sanction it.

And one other thing we must remember, that all the efforts that are being made to stir up dissension and ill will, will not succeed as fully as in the past. If we look the world over, and our own country is no exception, there is an increasing number of men of good will and not of ill will, who do not accept all that they are urged to believe about the hatred that they should have for other nations; they are not going to be stampeded into a bitter and vindictive spirit overnight. Let us remember that word that one of the great French philosophers spoke long ago, that you "cannot indict a whole people." You cannot. You cannot indict Japan, nor Italy, nor Germany. Do not let us indict a whole people. That truth has come home to the hearts of men in our day as never before. We are coming to understand a little better that essentially, as I said a moment ago, the heart of the world is sound.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP MORALITY

But the most searching and I believe the most hopeful fact that we confront today is a sense of discord in our hearts. The angels' song sounds strange today, and why? Because our individual morality and our group morality do not coincide. We will all go to our homes Christmas Day, and exchange these loving gifts with each other, and our hearts will be full of happiness and peace. We shall think no hard thoughts of anybody. We shall extend generous help to those who need it. The heart of the world and the purse of the world will be opened to human need on Christmas Day. We shall have no hatred for anybody as we gather round the Christmas tree and the Christmas fire. But the next day we may be gripped by a group consciousness or a national spirit that is the exact opposite. As we look over the world we see everywhere that contrast between individual and group morality.

As individuals then we shall observe Christmas Day and shall keep the spirit of it and catch something of its peace and beauty and love. As individuals belonging to a group or nation we shall perhaps the next day show ourselves to other groups as men of ill will. And I say to you that we cannot forever continue this Jekyll and Hyde morality. We cannot be good and kindly and gracious people in our individual lives and then turn around and hate and kill our fellow men when we are called to do so by a group or nation.

PEACE ON EARTH WILL COME

For the fact is that the contrast between these two situations is the force by which we are gripped today. Why does the angels' song sound so strange? Because we know that there is about us in the world today the opposite spirit, increasing apparently in power and intensity. Peace on earth—we cannot say it with any real sincerity, when we know the hatred that is in the world. But increasingly men are beginning to feel the terrible contrast between these two things. When we once confront that contrast sufficiently in our own lives and see it as it is, we cannot much longer be quite the same. Larger and larger numbers of people are realizing that we cannot live in two realms of life, one for our individual selves and those about us in our own family circle, and one in which we deal with the rest of the world at large.

When once we catch that vision, and when once we see that contrast as plainly as we are beginning to see it, we shall then set ourselves to work in real earnest to bring the world into the spirit of Christmas and to make a world order in those days that lie ahead in which that song of the angels will not sound like a mockery, but in which that "peace on earth" about which they sang will begin to be realized.

It is not a mockery. It is not a dream. It is not a vision of the night. It is not a mere will-o'-the-wisp. It is a challenge to us all. And it should evoke a new faith in us all. It is a prophecy of what some day, praise God, we shall see. For all our hearts are tender on Christmas Day. Some day we shall make every day like Christmas.

In the Inn

By Orva Lee Ice

THE Grand Hotel of all time was the inn at Bethlehem. Other hotels may have been larger. Other inns may have been more famous. The food, the air, the view, the service may have been better in a thousand other places, but for setting, for drama, for historic incident, all ages past and for all ages to come, the Bethlehem tavern stands forth as the greatest hotel of them all.

The world has always had difficulty in understanding that bigness cannot be measured by size. It is not something to be measured by the yardstick or weighed in balances. Mention the largest cities in the world and at once we think of London, New York, Paris. Suppose the importance of a place were measured by the event that happened there. That would bring to the first rank some places that have been almost forgotten. Florence would be one of the ranking places because of Leonardo, Michelangelo, Galileo. Genoa would stand forth to measure its bigness with others because from there came Columbus to discover a new world. Hodgenville, a village of the thousands of Kentucky, would have to be reckoned as a great place because it gave Lincoln to the world. Ur, the gem of the Chaldees, would be thought of because it was the home of Abraham the father of the faithful. "And thou, Bethlehem in the land of Judah, by no means the least honorable, thou art among the princely places."

Indeed, for historical event and its unsurpassed effect in the world, we must acclaim Bethlehem as the first city of the world because there came forth the Christ child. The inn there becomes most famous of all inns not only because of what happened there, but also because of what might have happened there and did not. The Bethlehem inn is the Grand Hotel of the ages.

In the inn at Bethlehem the busy world was going on,
Merchant and priest and courtesan,
Sinner and saint
And mendicant,
Going on and passing by
Banter and sigh, barter and lie
The way of life.
And in a manger filled with hay
In a stable across the way,
Wrapped in swaddling clothes there lay
The Lord of life.

"And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

THE WORLD'S GREATEST DAY

The world lived long without Christmas Day, but when it came, it came never to pass from the heart of the world.

Daylight came over the Judean hills as it had done days without end. To all appearances it was to be just another day, just another taxpaying day, the same milling crowd, the smell of beasts, the cry of venders, the plea of beggars. And it was. When the sun had taken its last peek over the western ridge, and night came stealing noiselessly in, it still had been one of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year. None of the people ever knew that day that salvation had come to the world. Had you passed a citizen in the quiet eventide and suggested to him that this had been one of the greatest days of the world, he might have wondered about your mind.

Night has let down her curtain and pinned it with a star. It is the lonesome time of day, a time to wish for home and the friendly fireside. Candlelights leap to the windows, and dart over the village like fireflies. Everyone seems housed for the night. The bark of a lonely dog comes up from the valley. The stars peep shyly out of the purple sky. There is the sound of music starting up in the inn. There is the giggle of suppressed laughter. Out of the dusk comes a weary traveler pulling at a tired and unwilling donkey. Upon the beast sits his wife now silhouetted against the light of the inn. The man seeks shelter in the tavern. Soon he returns. Behind him stands the gesticulating innkeeper. The traveler points to his wife. The hotel man shrugs his shoulders. The tired man steps out into the night and leads his animal away. They are lost in the darkness. "There was no room for them in the inn."

THE HOTEL MANAGER

In the inn the busy world is going on, merchant and priest and courtesan, sinner and saint and mendicant; going on and passing by, banter and sigh, barter and lie, the way of life.

The manager is busy tonight. He flutters from group to group, giving assurance, scolding waiters, apologizing to patrons, bowing and scraping. He is happy tonight. The inn is filled. Every room is taken, and good pay. Such guests! He rubs his hands in anticipation. The profits of this day will bring handsome things. He can buy a purple robe for himself, an expensive ring for his wife, another camel, perfume and spices from Araby, a bottle of wine for his son. Oh, life was good!

And in a manger filled with hay,
In a stable across the way,
Wrapped in swaddling clothes there lay
The Lord of life.

PUBLICAN AND SHEEP TRADERS

A man with a haunted look, and worry in his eyes, comes up to him. "Do you have any messages for me? Has a runner come?" The manager looks. "Nothing," he replies. And the dejected man shuffled away.

ORVA LEE ICE

There is a quickened motion of those nearest the door, lackeys running, and conversation in the inn breaks from its bedlam to a low murmur. A smallish man, sumptuously clothed in purple and fine linen, enters, followed by boys and secretaries. Expensive rings spit dazzling light across the lobby. A gold chain is about his neck. "It is Zaccheus, the publican," whispers one to another. Way is made for him. The publican is rich. He is met by the fawning proprietor. But he is impatient. He is assured. Tossing a bag of gold across the desk he makes for the stairs. An ominous rumble of hatred runs around the room as he is swallowed by the stairs.

A man with a swagger, a braggart soul, full of talk and wine, leans against the bar. Around him and in his crowd are others of his kind. There is bantering and loud and ribald joking. Oaths bolster weak vocabularies. They are sheep traders. They do not raise the sheep. The shepherds do that, the beggar sheep herders. They let the rustics do the drudgery—the care

of the lambs, the feeding of the sheep, the vigils of the night, the expense and the worry. They make the profit. They pay no taxes. They own no land. They gather to drink, to trade, and to talk sheep and the market. In the inn where it is warm. That is their life.

And in a manger filled with hay,
In a stable across the way,
Wrapped in swaddling clothes there lay
The Lord of life.

The man with the haunted look and the worry in his eyes goes up to the desk. Is there a message? No letter? Are you sure? Dejectedly he moves away. He is losing. He is failing. No word for him.

PRIEST, MAGDALEN, POLITICIAN

A priest shuffles through the door. His hands are folded in a gesture of piety. He walks with careful step lest his skirts be defiled with the common and the unclean. He mumbles his prayers. He is the holy man of the tribe of Levi. The badge of his holy order gleams upon his breast. The host greets him reverently. The host is now a holy man. There is a hush as the man of God passes by. Majestically he moves and ascends the stairs. He is the minister of life. When the godly man is gone the noise turns up again. Laughter comes once more. Life is itself again.

A courtesan slips into the room. She reeks of musk and cheap perfume. Her fingers are loaded with rings. She minces as she walks. She ogles with her eyes at the young men near the bar. She frames a smile with painted lips for all who will look upon her. She nods at a soldier standing near. The manager does not see. He shares her profits from her victims. She is a part of the hotel traffic, a commodity demanded by some of his guests just as is wine or food. Virtue can be bought here. The painted face moves out by the taproom door. Soon the soldier saunters over and goes out that way too. It is life in the inn.

An official bustles in. There are "oh's" and "ah's." He is Caesar's man. He gets his reservation from the smiling host. He whispers and the nodding innkeeper hands him a bundle of letters and official mail. He hands them to his attendant. He glances furtively toward the door. A strange figure is standing there. He is well hooded. He has followed this man of Rome. It is a day of plotting and political subterfuge. Many an uneasy head rests upon a fragile neck. Political jobs are bought and sold. Caesar has many friends and changes often in the direction of the fullest purse. The official halts but a moment. He mounts the stairs. He is anxious to see his mail. One letter might mean his downfall. His, indeed, is a life of constant anxiety and uncertainty.

And in a manger filled with hay,
In a stable across the way,
Wrapped in swaddling clothes there lay
The Lord of life.

The man with the haunted look and the worry in his eyes again goes haltingly to the desk. Message? Letter? The attendant shakes his head. The poor man, with a wild light in his eye, shuffles out the door and is swallowed by the night.

There was room and warmth in the inn for the publican. There was welcome for the trader. There was reverence and food for the priest. Place was made for a courtesan who plied her trade and occupied a room. But there was no room for the baby Jesus.

No beautiful chamber,
No soft cradle bed,
No place but a manger,
Nowhere for his head.

Life is a Grand Hotel. Life is a Bethlehem inn. No room in most of it for the Lord of life. The world is too much with us. The busy world going on and passing by, merchant and priest and courtesan, sinner and saint and mendicant.

Christmas time is here again. Time again for the Christ child to be born. Must he seek a manger for his cradle, or shall he have our hearts?

O, come to my heart, Lord Jesus.
There is room in my heart for Thee.

Why Tyrants Tremble

By Charles Lyon Seasholes

HEROD the king is "the villain in the piece" who gives intensity to the drama of the Christmas story. We know who that tyrant was and why he trembled. He was really only a puppet under the Roman Empire. There is no tyranny like that of an underling who is over others. Beset by fear of those above him and those below him, by psychological defense and compensation the fear of such a man is transmuted into ferocity.

Why did Herod tremble? The story says that he did so when the Wise Men came and asked, "Where is he who is born King of the Jews?" But that was not when he began to tremble—that only speeded up the tempo. That was not when fear first gripped him. Their question confirmed the fear already there, that sometime, somewhere, someone would arise to overthrow him. Ordinarily he would have taken little stock in inquiring Magi or in messianic tradition, but he was at a point where instead of believing there was nothing in it he was ready to believe that there was something in anything. So his fear finally drove him to the ruthless slaughter of the babes.

JESUS NO COUNTER-TYRANT

We make these two observations on the historical Herod. First, that Herod need not have trembled. The one who was born was not one who would bother Herod in the way he feared. He was not to be a counter-tyrant. Moreover, Herod did not last long enough for such a one to have bothered him. He died, probably, in very truth, scared to death.

Our second observation is, paradoxically, that Herod might well tremble, for there was something in the birth of that life which would in a way more effectual

and inexorable cause tyrants to fall. It is indicated prophetically in the song of Mary: "He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree." Let us see how this was to be done, looking now at some present-day Herods.

Names change. We do not call them tyrants; we call them dictators. They do not call themselves even that. They use innocuous names—Il Duce ("The Leader") Mussolini; Der Führer ("The Leader") Hitler; Comrade Stalin. But they all have these things which are common to tyrants: they rule by arbitrary power, they hold their power more in fear than in confidence, and that fear by compensation issues in arrogance, ferocity and ruthlessness.

CHARLES LYON SEASHOLES

Three events just prior to last Christmas have a bearing on this matter. The first is Stalin's making a farce of democratic elections in Russia by killing off all likely opponents, thus prompting John Dewey to say that the dictatorship of the proletariat seems to lead to the dictatorship over the proletariat; Mussolini's railing against the democracies when announcing his withdrawal from the League of Nations; and Hitler's responsibility for allowing the disparagement of Christianity, and specifically of Christmas, by the nazi leaders.

HEROD'S TREMBLING WAS NEEDLESS

We can understand why these present-day tyrants should fear overthrow, but why should they fear anything that has to do with the birth of a child nineteen hundred years ago—the thing that caused Herod to tremble? What has that to do with it all? This is the reason, and this is why tyrants must forever tremble. A principle came to clearest enunciation and fullest realization in that life, the principle of the supreme worth of human personality wherever it is found. The Bethlehem babe was the initial pledge of that life and that principle. A tyrant or dictator may laugh at that principle and say, "I can kill off this one and that one." Yes, he can, but he cannot kill that principle out of the universe, for it is rooted in the reality of things.

Herod trembled at the birth of Jesus. Why should the flutter of the heart of a newborn babe have shaken him? But that became the strong heartbeat of the man of Galilee. Herod, however, did not live until that time and these present-day tyrants live long after that time. Why should that shake anyone? But it is our conviction that that heartbeat is in oneness with the fundamental heartbeat of the universe. Tyrants living under high political blood pressure cannot stand that beat, and the systems they erect have such a high center of gravity that they cannot stand against that beat. Ultimately it casts down the mighty from their seats. We live in the kind of universe where in the long run the only leadership which can stand must be in humble self-identification with our common humanity, and the only systems which have a broad enough basis for permanence are those that are built on the supreme worth of human personality everywhere.

'EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD FUN' IN WAR

The ruthless methods of tyranny today out-Herod Herod. Winifred Kirkland writes that we rightly name the babes whom Herod murdered "Holy Innocents," for neither they nor the haloed child ever knew what it is to be snuffed out by poison gas. Madame Chiang Kai-shek has written an article entitled "Bombs for the Babes of China," telling how the present conflict is destroying her constructive work through the years for the children of China. Kagawa, powerless to stop the aggression of his own Japanese leaders, said as he stood with bowed head: "This is not Kagawa standing here, it is only his shadow. The real Kagawa is over there with the suffering women and children of China."

Young Mussolini, Vittorio, participated as an aviator in the Ethiopian campaign and has written a glowing account of it. "We arrived upon them unobserved and immediately dropped our loads of explosives. . . . I remember that one group of horsemen gave me the impression of a budding rose as the bombs fell in their midst. It was exceptionally good fun." This prompted these poignant lines by a writer in the *New Yorker:*

Where horsemen's blood runs sickly
To the absorbent earth,
The rose, unfolding quickly
To give the canker birth,

Reveals a wormlike beauty
To the new ranks of youth,
Their hands upraised in duty,
Theirs heels unshod with ruth.

Astride the bird of battle,
Mingling their hair with cloud,

They sit, and drop the little
Bright shaft with death endowed.

Look down, look down, young Victor
Upon the imperial dream!
Stop well your ears with living
Lest one of the dying scream!

The new world's grim prospectus
Is spread for all to read;
And man, once called Erectus,
Will crawl once more, and bleed.

The Ethiopian horsemen
Once more in light must die,
To make the rose of beauty
For young men in the sky.

Then earth from night shall borrow,
And the strange chapters close,
Where diggers of tomorrow
Scratch at the fossil rose.

"The rose of beauty for young men in the sky." That is the flower of tyranny! But is that the finest flower of humanity? Is that to be man's destiny? No, there is another rose—"Lo, how a rose e'er blooming, from tender stem hath sprung." That's the finest flower. If a flower plucked from a crannied wall, held in the hand and understood, could in Tennyson's conception tell us what "God and man is," that flower plucked from the walls of a manger in Bethlehem and held in our minds and hearts tells us in very truth what God is and what man is. Human personality wherever found is "mighty lak" that Rose. Out of those who thus cherish him and all their fellow men the eternal God is building his kingdom forever, while tyrants tremble, totter and fall.

The Glorious Liberty Of the Meek

By Warren C. Taylor

Blessed are the meek. Matthew 5:5.

THE Master is reported to have pronounced a blessing upon the meek, asserting that they are the ones who inherit the earth. Once he took a little child and set him in the midst as an object lesson, assuring the disciples that they must change their ways and become like a child if they were to enter his kingdom; and this was, strikingly enough, just after they had been wrangling as to who should be greatest among them.

It is easy to say piously that we of course accept all this; but do we? The whole modern world seems to be set against it. Ask Hitler about it. Ask Mussolini, or the Japanese war lords, or Stalin. Ask "Big Business," or the C. I. O. Ask the leaders of American aristocracy. Ask our jingo editors.

But perhaps Jesus was right about it. In fact, there are situations in the world of today that would warrant such assumption. For the modern world has gone on in a very heady way, implying anything but the spirit of the meek, and the results are none too good. When the World War ended, the victor nations forgot every lesson of history and forced upon the vanquished a conqueror's "peace," and in that transaction they planted the seeds of all Europe's turmoil of today. One recalls the similar occasion when Lincoln was being pressed to exert punitive pressure upon the conquered south, and that Greatheart said quietly, "I shall treat them as if they had never gone away." But there was no greatheart among the Big Four at Versailles.

Other cocky, prideful experiments have eventuated just as disastrously. We have tried to establish a World Court and a League of Nations, but pride has forestalled any success. We have airily declared that "Business is business"—and look at the appalling spectacle of want in a land of plenty; consider our boasted success, with ten millions of unemployed. The dictionary definition of "pride" is very illuminating: unreasonable conceit of one's own superiority, whether as to talent, wealth, beauty, accomplishments, rank, office or other distinction, with correspondingly contemptuous feeling toward others." Well, the world is full of that, and will you please view the results of it?

THE MECHANICS OF SCIENCE AND ART

Now, there are certain groups of people who understand the glorious liberty of the meek. Every true scientist knows it. Long ago, Thomas Henry Huxley, speaking of the spirit of the scientist, said that he must learn "to sit down like a little child before a fact." That is, he must lay aside his own conceits and prejudices and very humbly seek to know the truth. What an illustration lies right at hand in the recent biography of Marie Curie! Four long years of patient, humble toil in a poorly equipped laboratory, until at last that meekness was blessed in the discovery of radium! Every artist knows this secret of the meek. A great artist was asked by a group of friends to show them some specimen of his skill in drawing, and he turned to his easel and with one free sweep of his hand drew a perfect circle. How many circles do you imagine he drew in humble meekness before he could do that? Have you ever heard Fritz Kreisler play? His haunting music holds great audiences spellbound. And it looks so easy—when Kreisler does it. How much meek devotion do you think lies back of that?

In the world of human relations today, how desperately we need that spirit of meek inquiry and endeavor! The sociologists are all saying that there is a terrible social lag, that we have been so busy mastering physical nature and building machines that we have almost overlooked the fact that in spite of our physical achievements, human relations are in a bad way. It is not good that millions can find no employment, and that other millions live below the level of decent human life. If our sensibilities were not blunted by familiarity with this thing, we should be terribly shocked to consider that we burn food in some quarters and others elsewhere go hungry; that we limit production in one area and people are in want in another; that a nation's

wealth is so badly distributed that two per cent of our people own as much of it, at one extreme, as the other ninety-eight per cent at the other. It is not good that capital and labor are arrayed against each other; it is not good that one race, because of some accidental pigmentation of its skin, finds itself spurned by another; it is not good that so many artificial barriers keep class and class apart; not good that children, in their normal play time and school time, are at work and millions of adults are idle; not good that the accidental fact of race or country should set one nation in a warring camp against another. Why is this so? It is because men have gone on in their proud ways, unwilling to learn.

WARREN C. TAYLOR

One is inclined to suspect that all true spiritual insight comes by way of meekness. If we come to our quest in blind prejudice and haughty pride, we have slammed the door in our own faces. And such door-slamming has terribly unfortunate consequences. Take the religious situation in our own land today. Somebody has asked why it is that the most uninformed man in any group loudly insists, "You don't know nothin'!" I am thinking of the prejudiced and terribly uninformed attitude of many "defenders of the faith." For example, there lived in Alexandria in the first century a man who has come to be known as Philo the Jew. He was a philosopher, who usually had his head in the clouds and occasionally got his feet on the ground. Philo was an ardent devotee of the Hebrew Scriptures and also a great admirer of the Greek culture, and dreamed of welding together these two great heritages. One idea Philo put forth was that the first five books of the Old Testament, commonly known as the five books of Moses, were revealed to the great Lawgiver by divine dictation, so that Moses transcribed them at the voice of God as a stenographer takes dictation. That idea caught on, and gradually it spread to include the whole Old Testament. Two centuries later, the New Testament had taken form and somehow the church extended this idea to those writings. And there you have one cause of the wide rift between the so-called modernists and fundamentalists. Too many theologians and their followers have slammed the door shut.

GOOD WILL AMONG THE CHURCHES

Does not this attitude of pride and intellectual conceit underlie the whole sorry scramble of theological difference? How much more agreeable things could be if we had a better spirit among our churches and churchmen! Why cannot the fundamentalist reach out his hand over the dividing line of pride and clasp the hand of his modernist brother and say to him: "Let us be friends. Perhaps you have had some advantage, some angle of insight, that has been denied to me. Come, share with me your spiritual treasures." And likewise, why cannot the modernist reach out and take his fundamentalist brother by the hand and say to him: "Let us be friends. I know your ardent desire to guard the treasures of truth. Perhaps you appreciate the ancient heritage as I do not; perhaps, in my intoxication with modern scholarship, I have overlooked some values that lie in the historic tradition. Come, share with me." Neither group is always right. The fundamentalist is right in insisting that our own day is debtor to the past, that our faith is "something given" and is to be guarded and treasured. But if he shows a cantankerous, fighting spirit that is not Christlike, he is wrong, unqualifiedly wrong. The modernist is right in insisting that "the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns"; that, as Robinson of Leyden told the Pilgrims, God has much truth that shall break forth. In his desire to know the real truth of things, he is right. But in the haughty and cavalier spirit that he often manifests toward the more conservative brother, he is dead wrong.

Blessed are the meek, who can sit down before truth in the spirit of a child. I venture the guess that more than ninety per cent of our religious differences could be happily resolved if we knew how to do that. It is truth we all want, and let us remember that they who find it must walk the pathway of the meek.

THE LOST CHRIST

And finally, will you recall that to the great utterance of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," he added: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me. For I am meek." The whole world needs to hear him saying that. Nineteen centuries have rolled by since he said it, and what things we have done to him! We have enshrined him in creeds, products of Middle Age speculation, till the humble Man of Galilee seems to have become a joint or clasp in a theological system. Then, too, we have made him a figure of art, with a wistful, wan face crowned by a halo. Do any of those pictures suggest the dynamic personality of the Master? We have built

great cathedrals to him, and in worshiping him we have forgotten to heed his words. While calling ourselves Christian, we have gone on, with pride of heart and pride of mind, to build up a civilization that in its major aspects is pagan. Did he not say, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

The world has made marvelous discoveries, but it still waits for *the* great discovery, that the way of Jesus is divine, that he is the way.

I saw the conquerors riding by
With cruel lips and faces wan:
Musing on kingdoms sacked and burned,
There rode the Mongol Ghengis Kahn.

And Alexander, like a God,
Who sought to weld the world in one;
And Caesar with his laurel wreath;
And, like a thing from Hell, the Hun.

And leading, like a star, the van
Heedless of upstretched arm and groan,
Inscrutable Napoleon went,
Dreaming of empire, and alone. . . .

Then all they perished from the earth
As fleeting shadows from a glass,
And, conquering down the centuries,
Came Christ, the Swordless, on an ass.

A Vision and a Prophecy

THE kingdom of God is the sovereignty of Love—since God is Love. That great proclamation brings comfort and courage to all whose hearts are attuned to it; for if God is Love, then Love is the ultimate power of the universe, and every purpose or policy prompted by Love—by the desire to serve rather than to gain—will reach its fulfillment, whatever the sacrifices that may first be required of it, because it is allied with the supreme power.

We seem to see a vast multitude drawn from all races and from every social class pledged to one thing and to one thing only, the acknowledgment of God's sovereignty by obedience to his purpose in every department of life. As they labor there takes shape a world, much like our own and yet how different! Still city and country life with all their manifold pursuits and interests, but no leading into captivity and no complaining in our streets.

Such a vision may be prophecy if we will have it so; the condition to be fulfilled by us . . . is that in heart and policy and act we fully acknowledge the sovereignty of God, to whom we have been taught, when we pray, to say, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory."

WILLIAM TEMPLE, Archbishop of York.

PERHAPS our acutest trouble lies in our refusal to realize how hard it is to be a Christian. We are always asking for crowns and chief seats in the Kingdom without a thought of the crusade that comes first.

H. R. L. SHEPPARD.

Facing the New Year

BY HENRY HITT CRANE

NEW YEAR'S DAY! What does it mean to you? Is it just an arbitrary designation on a calendar announcing a holiday, a celebration, a spree? Is it inventory time, wherein you take stock not only of your business but of your habits, ideas and relationships? Is it the annual occasion for making new, noble resolutions which sooner or later may or may not be broken? Is it another chance to start all over again, a new clean page of time on which to write a better record than any yet made? Is it a challenge to high adventure, exploration in the realm of the unknown, a sailing out into a new ocean of opportunity and limitless possibilities?

Or is it just the continuation of the same old dull routine?

Take your choice. You can make it what you will. For whatever the New Year holds for you in the way of actual events, whether they be good or bad, rewarding or penalizing, will largely depend on the attitude you maintain. What happens *to* you never matters so much as what happens *in* you. The way you look at circumstances, how you handle them, what you ultimately do with them, more largely determines their quality, so far as you are concerned, than their own essential nature.

Suppose you take the analogy of the ship sailing out to sea. It is as good a symbol as any, and more suggestive than most. As you launch out into the New Year, imagine yourself standing on the deck of some great ocean liner as the gangplank is drawn, the mooring slipped, the throb of the engine begins and the great craft heads out to sea.

Your destination? The goals you wish to reach, the achievements you set for yourself. Just how you will arrive at the port of hail; what devious ways you will have to follow; what storms, what unknown dangers and difficulties, what possible mutinies and withal what unromantic days of monotonous calm you will have to pass through, nobody knows. The uncertainty is a part of the thrill. If you knew what the future holds for you the lure of the voyage would largely be lost.

A TRAVELER OF OLD WHO ARRIVED

There is an ancient story of an enforced journey across a stormy sea that is singularly suggestive. Some nineteen hundred years ago a certain citizen of the imperial city of Rome had been unjustly accused of crime. The trial was held in a remote province of the Empire where there was scant likelihood of securing justice because of the notorious corruption of the local courts. Realizing he was in danger of death, this man availed himself of his rights as a Roman citizen to be tried in the tribunals of Rome itself. His "appeal unto Caesar" automatically took his case out of the jurisdiction of the province and necessitated his being taken to the capital city. A centurion was appointed as his personal guard and conductor, and as a prisoner he set sail for Rome.

It was a thrilling voyage. All that might have hap-

pened on a dozen trips conspired to take place on this one journey—as some persons have in a single year enough experiences of all kinds adequately to supply a decade. There were, to be sure, hours of tedious travel; but there were exciting moments, too. The sea grew snarly and mean, and finally let loose her fury in a terrific storm. When the ship was in the midst of the storm, and the winds and waves were tossing the craft about with desperate carelessness, all on board were so bewildered they were on the verge of panic—all but our prisoner, and he seemed strangely calm and full of poise throughout the protracted turmoil.

Two whole weeks the storm raged. Endurance was exhausted, nerves were shattered, hope was dead, despair was everywhere. The efforts of the crew to keep the vessel in her course were unavailing. Despite their struggle the ship drove toward a hidden reef. Imminent destruction threatened. Four anchors were released from the stern, and for a time they held.

Availing themselves of this temporary respite, several sailors sought to save themselves, regardless of the plight of the others. Under the guise of releasing anchors from the bow, these men slipped over the side of the ship and were about to escape in a lifeboat—when our doughty prisoner espied them. Calling to the soldiers astern, he shouted: "Except these abide in the ship, we cannot be saved!" The would-be deserters were promptly apprehended and held on board. The result was as the famous old prisoner indirectly prophesied—all were eventually saved.

That ancient incident is illustrative of a rather universal experience. As the spirit of man sets sail on the sea of a New Year's adventure, anything may happen. When storm periods come—as they have a way of doing ever so often—almost invariably there are attempted desertions. Certain sailors always try to escape from the straining craft of character. Their desertion means disaster. Let them go and all is lost. Hold them fast and the ship is saved.

These indispensable sailors are not too hard to name. They are common enough, but common as air is common, whose value is seldom sensed until we are threatened with its loss; common as water is common, without which shipwrecked men go mad.

COURAGE COMES FIRST

The first, of course, is Courage. Somehow or other, in hours of direst difficulty, this seaman of the spirit is likely to slip away. Then fear takes the helm, and cowardice conquers the crew. With courage gone no character can long survive. But if it be kept on deck defeat and destruction cannot overwhelm. There is never any real tragedy where there is not cowardice. So long as you hold fast to courage you are unconquerable. The fell clutch of circumstance may rob you of your money, deprive you of your liberty, lock you in prison, torture you; fate itself, the plotting stars, the devices of destiny, all may smite you; but you cannot be overcome, if only you be of good courage.

The grim, gray cosmic forces that "gang up" on you menacingly must ultimately capitulate before your fearlessness. Whatever theologies may say, there is but one unpardonable sin: it is to be afraid. The fundamental virtue of virtues is courage, and the only one that is universally recognized as such. There have been savage tribes who have not even known a name for some of the moral excellencies of our civilization; but there has never existed a tribe anywhere who did not revere courage.

Remember the unconquerable Captain Scott, the valiant explorer of the South Seas and of the Antarctic, the discoverer of the South Pole. Listen to that gallant gentleman when frozen, starved, shipwrecked and lost in the icy wilds of the cruel South, he utters his farewell to his friends far away:

> Hoping this letter may be found and sent to you, I write you a word of farewell. I want you to think well of me and my end. . . . Good-by—I am not at all afraid. . . . We are in a desperate state—feet frozen, etc., no fuel and a long way from food, but it would do your heart good to be in our tent, to hear our songs and our cheery conversation. . . . We are now very near the end. . . . We did intend to finish ourselves when things proved like this, but we have decided to die naturally without . . .

Captain Scott and his gallant companions died, you say. Their bodies, shrouded in relentless ice, were found at long last by intrepid searchers. This farewell word scribbled in pencil trailed away into the great silence that was waiting for their dauntless writer. But Scott and his adventurers did not die. They could not die! Rather they sailed into immortality. They arrived!—as all men must if they but keep courage on board.

Sail on then—into the New Year—unafraid. Let not courage depart from the ship. And—Bon Voyage!

NO SALVATION WITHOUT HONOR

A second indispensable sailor is Honor. Except this seaman abide on the ship of the soul no man can be saved. He it is who holds the helm and keeps the vessel to her course when the storms of passion and the driving winds of temptation would hurl her to destruction.

A youth approaching the great adventure of manhood, as you this day approach the New Year, went to his elderly friend, a great and famous writer. Said the lad to the sage: "You have written much for a great many men. Will you write something especially for me? I want one word which I may hold in my heart as though it were the most priceless jewel of life—one word from you to me that shall always be the touchstone of my life." And this is what the wise man wrote: "Honor."

Underlying the whole edifice of civilization, as the rock supports the house, or as old Atlas held up the earth itself, is the thing called honor. Without it the loveliest woman is more hateful than a witch, the wisest man more ignorant than a fool, and the most scrupulous religionist more dangerous than the devil. Honor is compact of all the best in man. In it there is pride without egoism, courage without stupidity, loyalty without partisanship, reverence without superstition, gentleness without weakness, conscience without casuistry, justice without cruelty, fidelity without stubbornness—all that is admirable in man, and is desirable in woman.

Honor is the charm of the young and the strength of the old. Honor is a secret mark upon the forehead, which no man can see except another who has its like. Honor is that look in a woman's eye "which makes brutes men and men divine." Honor is the peace of lovers, the insurance of business, the stability of thrones, the secret power of statesmen and the patent nobility of a gentleman.

Without honor those who bathe are filthy, the cultured are vulgar, the famous are infamous and those in high station are contemptible. One may lose place, money, health, and life itself, yet if he hold fast his honor he is the winner. All real happiness is a by-

HENRY HITT CRANE

product of honor. And to be an honorable man in hell would be better than to be a dishonorable man in heaven.

Into the New Year you go—a person of honor! Bon Voyage!

GOOD CHEER WORKS MIRACLES

A third soul sailor is Cheer. He must not be allowed to escape either, for except he abide in the ship you cannot be saved.

When the dark clouds of real difficulty begin to gather, this indispensable seaman may very easily slide over the side of the ship and disappear. When he does, a veritable host of horrid creatures swarms the vessel unrestrained—and the spirit of man is engulfed in defeat. Gloom, dejection, melancholy, pessimism, despondency, prostration, despair—such a horde of hostile demons dominate your life and work more havoc in a few short hours than you can estimate. And all because good cheer has been allowed to escape. Hold on to him relentlessly! For he must be kept aboard the ship!

Think of the vast company of sick or sorrowing or suffering humanity—those whom the bludgeonings of chance have sought to break! Think more particularly of those who, although subjected to all manner of afflictions cannot be broken—valiant, undefeated, spiritual triumphs, all of them!

Think, for specific example, of one who sails into the open sea of the New Year with a cargo of calamity he has been compelled to carry for a decade. Smitten with a terrible affliction, he is booked for hours, days, weeks, months of acute suffering and anguish. With everything to live for, he has heard already the warning notes of those channel buoys that would direct his craft out into the wide and wonderful sea of eternity. Death looks him full in the face—and tries determinedly to frighten, unnerve and bulldoze him into submission. But that old imposter is impotent in dealing with this splendid spirit. He is immune—and unconquerable. Cheer is aboard—always!

The deep lesson that all the wisest philosophers would teach you is this: Nothing matters in the long run but the temper of your spirit! It is not facts, nor the acts of others, nor events, that matter—but simply the way you look at whatever happens. You cannot help what happens *to* you, remember; but you certainly can help what happens *in* you!

CREATIVE FAITH A SURE ANCHOR

But there is another seaman more important still: Faith. Let him escape from the ship and there is scant chance of survival at all. For when faith fails you are doomed. How many ships and how many souls go down because confidence dies, and in its place doubt rises, mistrust comes forth and suspicion stalks about. Doubt of self, doubt of friends, doubt of the world, doubt of justice, doubt of the cause to which you once committed yourself, doubt of God—doubt of all: this is another way of saying "Death."

It is little short of amazing to discover what a potent force faith actually is. It gathers up your life and pulls it together and gives it direction as nothing else can do. It sets goals and then marshals intelligence and energy to achieve them. It releases power when all other devices fail. To get things done, an ounce of faith is worth a ton of experience. For faith is one of the most creative forces a man can know.

Says Harry Emerson Fosdick: "As human beings, we are so made that we cannot help living in two worlds, the 'is' and the 'ought,' the actual and the possible, the factual and the ideal. Now the power which reaches out into the 'ought' and transforms it into the 'is,' which lays hold upon the possible and of it makes the actual, is creative faith. When such faith stands up, fear falls down."

Into the New Year you sail. Whatever comes—long, drab, dull days of irksome monotony or tumultuous times of desperate difficulty—hold fast to faith. It will be easy to grow cynical, to lose confidence in yourself, to sneer at virtue, to laugh at love, to disbelieve in decency, to cry out against the evil fate that robs life of its luster and its worth. Don't do it!

Though the heavens fall, keep faith on board. Believe in yourself. Believe in the essential integrity of the universe. Believe in your God. Bon voyage to you!

ENDURANCE TO THE END

Lastly, there is the sturdiest sailor of them all, without whose help you never arrive. His name is Endurance. The most fatal mistake any man can make is to quit, to give up, to stop trying. To go on, and on, and on, in spite of everything is the secret of all success. Let endurance slip over the side of the ship, and sooner or later you drift to your doom. This seaman must abide in the vessel as you venture out into the New Year and the uncharted waters of the future.

Remember, there is no such thing as defeat or disaster for the man who endures. You may lose your money; fail in business; dire poverty may beset you. Go on! You may lose your position; be disappointed in love; disgrace may befall you; sickness lay you low; friends may desert you; calamity of numerous kinds may shadow you. Don't quit. Don't capitulate. You shall arrive! "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

Courage, Honor, Cheer, Faith, Endurance—these five! "Except these abide in the ship, we cannot be saved." Hold them fast.

Enduring Peace

By James E. Freeman

Peace to be enduring must be founded in righteousness. The ways of diplomacy may at times be determined by expediency, but the way of peace is secured through the judgment of men who are governed by righteous judgments.

There is a fine phrase in a beautiful prayer which runs thus: "Establish among them that peace which is the fruit of righteousness." Whether it be the differences or misunderstandings that create divisions between friends, or the recurring strife between men in the industrial workroom, or the more serious controversies between states and nations, there can be but one basis of a lasting reconciliation, and that basis is justice, equity and honest dealing. A truce may be effected and a temporary peace established that stays more serious results, but if it is to be a peace that means lasting satisfaction and good will, it must be grounded in righteousness.

Does not the whole question of a lasting peace find its security in something other than compromises on expansive lines on a hastily drawn map? Have we not reached a stage in the life of men and of nations where something nobler and finer than the old ways and practices of diplomacy must determine the action of nations? The cynic has had his day and it has been long and bloody, and the record is one of shame and selfish purposes and prostituted ideals. Unless something better can be devised, especially in a world that has perfected instruments of wholesale destruction, what does the future hold for the oncoming generation?

War is no longer a question of the heaviest battalions; it is a question that concerns vast concentrations of defenseless men, women and children in concentrated areas who, unarmed and defenseless, are the prey of the eagles of destruction. These modern factors, these potential engines of destruction make war more diabolical than it has ever been. This situation compels us to revise our methods of adjusting differences and reconciling disputes.

Once a mighty teacher affirmed that "they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," and in another place he gave the peacemakers a supreme place of distinction. He was thinking of peacemakers motivated by righteous judgments.

We have a sublime hope, and we believe that the Prince of Peace is presently to reign in the hearts and minds and consciences of men. We believe it, because we can see no peace without it.

A Pastoral Prayer

By David Nelson Beach

ALMIGHTY and Eternal God, draw nigh unto us as we gather again with joy in Thy sanctuary. For all the divers memories we bring with us from the past days and weeks, for sunshine and storm, for lake and forest, for sea and mountain, and for the benedictions of this glad season, we thank Thee.

Be graciously in our midst as we rejoice together. Let our joy be Thy joy, and Thy ways our ways. And so fulfill upon and within us the authentic and noble in all our yesterdays.

Be with us as with awe and faith we walk toward the shadowy destiny which lies before us all but unknown. If our sins and the sins of our age must be tried as silver is tried and burned away in some pentecost of calamity, help us both to recognize them for what they are, and to repent us of them.

Make us humble as Thou dost sift out the hearts of men before Thy judgment seat, humble enough to hear and heed Thy truth above the clamant lies which the world exalts. Help us to be patient when those lies seem triumphant, and steadfast if wrong wreaks its will upon us.

Above all keep us from all prejudice, fear or frenzy. So fill our hearts with Thy grace and truth that we may have no hatred or bitterness toward anyone.

Let our will be good will, our ways the ways of peace. Keep us diligent in friendliness, eager in creative work. And in the leavening of life by love grant us that victory which the world can neither give nor take away.

To that end be with us as around the Master's table we share more adequately the triumphant joy of him who said long ago: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." In his name we pray. Amen.

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'Our Busy Lives'

By John A. McAfee

"I KNOW just how busy you are, but——." How many times the minister has this said to him! Whenever a parishioner addresses me in this manner one of the little devils within which is always tempting me to impertinence whispers: "Say, 'How do you know just how busy I am or that I am busy at all? As a matter of fact I have all the time there is and I waste more of it than any man I know.' " Of course I never quite succumb. Partly because I hold all my parishioners in awe and partly because I do not want to disillusion them. I do frequently protest that I am not too busy to do anything which it is my rightful duty to do. I often wonder how in the world our people get the idea that we ministers are such frightfully busy and overworked men. Or do I wonder?

• *Sad Tales of Busy Preachers*

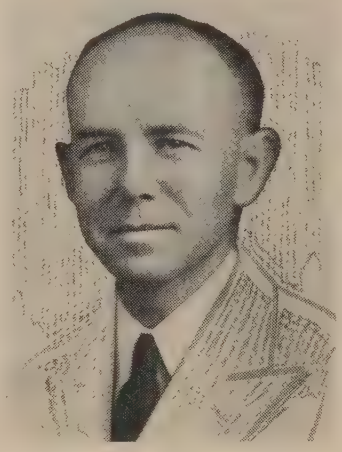
The first four times I heard Dr. A. speak he was talking to different groups. On all four occasions he told us what a tremendously busy man he was. He enlightened us as to how many days it was since he had been home an evening and of how that morning his wife had expressed the hope that at some future time she might again have the opportunity of making his acquaintance. He said that he worked eighteen hours a day, a reasonably good day even for a preacher. Now, far be it from me to question the veracity of the good doctor. This I must say—that, after hearing him speak several times and judging by the intellectual content of his addresses, I am convinced that no considerable portion of those eighteen hours was spent in study. Too, I must testify that the daily grind seemed to agree with him admirably. There was nothing about him that resembled the appearance of yon Cassius.

The other day I sat at the lunch table with Rev. Mr. B. He monopolized the conversation informing us as to the exacting and exhausting schedule he was carrying. He said that on that particular day he was especially tired because he had had to arise early to speak at one of our public schools at 8:15. As I heard his sad tale I could hardly control my tears. I did feel so dreadfully sorry for this six feet, two hundred pound, hulk of a man who had had to crawl out of bed and get to one of our schools shortly after the six-year-old children of our community had reported for work. Such cruelty to this dear brother seemed to me intolerable in an enlightened land.

• *Besetting Sins of the Ministry*

Full well do all of us know where our people get the idea that we are such busy men. They get it from us; sometimes from our words, more often from our actions. We give the impression purposely. Thus we think we enhance our importance in their sight. We yield to two of the besetting sins of the clergy, laziness and self-pity.

We know that we are masters of our own time as are few, if any, of



John A. McAfee

the men of our churches. We know that we are plain lazy, that we trifle our time away. We do not want our people to discover how lazy we are so we encourage the impression that we are tremendously busy.

Even more insidious is the temptation to self-pity. Some motherly soul is always at hand to admonish us that we simply cannot stand the frightful pace we are going, that we must take care of ourselves, not for our own sakes alone but for the sake of the work as well—or we will break down. We quite agree with her, because we know that we really are overburdened! We often wonder, not only how one small head can carry all we know, but how any brains and bodies can stand up under the load which we carry. However we are martyrs to the cause and intend to go ahead steadily killing ourselves by overwork. (Fortunately few of our people know what excellent life insurance risks preachers are.)

It is usually true that the ones who carry the lightest load kid themselves into thinking they are the busiest. Frank was a lad in my congregation living at home and attending the near-by college. His expenses were all paid by doting parents and he was carrying a moderate schedule. He had promised to do some work for the church and had neglected it. One day I dared say something to him about his neglect. Though he was and is a good friend of mine he told me that I could do it myself. Then he added that I did not know what it was to be busy. Well, at the time I had a church of moderate size and we were in the midst of a building program. I had a family of small children and was trying to pull my share of the load in denominational and community affairs. However, I did not have a word to say to this care-free college lad. Perhaps he knows now what it is to be busy.

• *Good Working Hours for Ministers*

The minister ought to be able, without undue fatigue or any feeling of self-pity, to match working hours with any man in his congregation, even the druggist. It is a healthy thing for the preacher's soul, and also good for his parishioners, if he makes himself get down to his study at least as early as the prevailing time of beginning work in his community, and that, no matter how late he may have been out the night before attending committee meetings. The very variety of his work should enable him to put in long hours. There may be other occupations which call for such varied activity as does the pastorate, but if so I do not know them. From study to educational work, to executive work, to pastoral work—this is his daily routine. A man could not stand up under twelve to fourteen hours of any one type of this work over a long period of time, but he can under the combination.

One day my son, then a lad of about four, and I were sitting together on the front porch of our home when a streetcar passed. The heir to my ancestral throne said: "Daddy, I have decided not to be a streetcar conductor." I felt somewhat relieved to know that he had altered his choice of occupation since I could see that this particular profession was a passing one. "Well, Sonny, just what are you going to be?" He replied that he had decided to be a preacher. Naturally I was pleased that my own profession had so commended itself to

him that he wanted to follow in my footsteps. I continued the conversation by asking him just why he had decided to be a minister. His answer was: "Well, I haven't seen you doing any very hard work." Whether this answer was a reflection on the activities of the father or only on the low ideals he had instilled in his son I do not know. I am afraid it was both.

• *We Are So Serious!*

By boasting of our busyness we may hide our laziness and we may gain the compassion of some of the mothers in Israel. What we do more is to give an example to our people of lives improperly lived and to shunt them off from coming to us with problems to which we should have the time to give attention.

"Seriousness, after all," says Lin Yutang in his book *The Importance of Living,* "is only a sign of effort, and effort is a sign of imperfect mastery. A serious writer is awkward, and ill at ease in the realm of ideas as a nouveau riche is awkward, ill at ease and self-conscious in society. He is serious because he has not come to feel at home with his ideas." We really think we are so tremendously busy and we are in dead earnest about it. We are so owlishly serious. If we are as we think we are, then it is a reflection on our ability.

What one of us does not take himself all too seriously? Life is serious and ours is a serious task. Most of us think too highly of ourselves and of our indispensability to the Kingdom of God. We ought to be able to laugh and laugh heartily at our own monstrous pretensions and self-importance. The writer quoted above suggests that when the world is on the brink of war, instead of calling to conference our staid and serious diplomats, the humorists be called together to settle the international disputes. If this is not possible he thinks that the world might be made safe if the diplomats called together were compelled, before the morning and again before the afternoon sessions, to attend at least ten minutes of the showing of Mickey Mouse. Sometimes we preachers, in our self-importance and our impatience, remind me of nothing quite so much as Donald Duck.

• *Ministerial Marthas*

Some of us are busy because we are doing the things we have no right to do. We think our sins are those of omission while as a matter of fact they are sins of commission. Surely the right use of time is one of the most perplexing problems all of us have to face. Most of us are ministerial Marthas. We are encumbered about much serving, and we are neglecting the better part. Whatever is done in our churches we are the doers thereof. We do the things that others should do and thus we rob them of their opportunities. Some of us have never learned to say "No." With all of us it should be a matter of careful and prayerful study as to what things we personally should undertake and what we should not. Some things we should not do even though they must remain undone.

Every man has time and strength to do what he ought to do. Granted that the "ought" in a sense begs the question; it is nonetheless true. If one does not have the time and strength to do a thing it is prima facie evidence that he ought not to do it. The best a man can do is to do what he can and let it go at that. The minister's work, like that of the housewife's, is never done. It is well to remember

> That man is blest
> Who does his best
> And leaves the rest.

Many of us are doing inefficiently the work we are doing. We fritter away our time. Now this is right down my alley. I honestly believe that I can work the hardest and accomplish the least of any man in the ministry. When I go home to lunch and say at the table to no one in particular, "Well, what do you think?" my disrespectful children reply in chorus, "Dad hasn't gotten a thing done all morning." Alas and alack, exactly what the children say is so often true! The harder I work the less I seem to accomplish. Some of us come to think that we are temperamental prima donnas, or better, prophets who can only wait until the spirit moves us. This may be true, but if it is, I am convinced that it is a reflection on our own efficiency.

• *The Foolishness of Being 'Rushed to Death'*

A number of years ago one evening the minister of one of the churches in the small community where I lived passed by and stopped to visit. In a few minutes he said: "I must be gettin' home. Here it is Friday night and I haven't did a thing on my Sunday sermons yet." Not long ago I asked a minister who does an amazing amount of "calling" when he found time to prepare his sermons. He replied that he got his next Sunday sermons after the second service on Sunday night. Perhaps he meant he got them out of his barrel or out of a can. Those of us who are incessant grinds at this matter of sermon production no doubt wish we could work that easily.

We spend fruitless hours pumping at dry wells and we wonder why we get no results. We work hard enough but we have never learned how to work. Let us not try to elicit pity. Rather let us realize that we deserve contempt that we are professionally so inefficient.

• *Delaying the Things of God*

We preach to others and we ourselves are in danger of becoming castaways. We talk about the divine strength and wisdom. We ought to show the result of this wisdom and strength in calm, unhurried lives, as well as to preach about it. Surely we set a poor example to go through life forever out of breath, forever giving the impression that we are rushed to death. Jesus certainly led a crowded life. On occasions he did not have so much as time to eat, and few of us miss many meals. Yet he gave to no one the impression of busyness. "He who is in a hurry," said St. Vincent de Paul, "delays the things of God."

Surely in this chaotic, distracted, breathless world the ministers of Christ should lead lives unmarred by hurry, stress or strain. It is quite too bad if we give our people the impression that we are driven, enormously busy. It is worse if we give them an example of busyness.

If we are so busy that people pity us and will not come to us lest they add to the burdens we are carrying, then we are too busy. If we are too busy to do what we ought to do, then we are too busy.

World Christian Population

RELIGIOUS statistics are interesting if not always exact. Recent estimates of membership in the Christian churches place the total number of Christians at about 720 to 740 million. Of these some 360 million are Roman Catholic, 125 to 145 million Greek Orthodox Catholic and about 235 million are Protestant including the Anglicans.

Compared with other religions; Islam numbers about 270 million and Hinduism 250 million.

Good Medicine

A WISE man was talking to an audience of physicians. He told them of the sympathy he had for the sick who, stung by the worries attendant upon the frayed nerves of the ill, vainly sought escape in sleep. He assured them that the possession of faith in Christ was able to bring a peace which even passed all medical understanding. "I have an unfailing formula for peaceful rest," he told them. His formula was in spirit and the word the Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Some of the doctors scoffed, but only a very few. Many came for weeks after to testify to his wisdom. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." That is great medicine for the troubled soul.

THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

REV. FREDERICK M. MEEK *has been* minister of All Souls Congregational Church, Bangor, Me., since 1936, following a four-year pastorate at the Congregational Church in Biddeford, Me. Mr. Meek is an arts graduate from Mount Allison University in Canada and he received his B.D. at Yale Divinity School. While at Yale he was associate minister at Dwight Place Congregational Church of New Haven.

A graduate of Iowa State College and of Boston University School of Theology, Rev. HAROLD E. CARLSON received A.M. degrees from both Boston and Harvard Universities. He held pastorates in Marion, Ia., and in Wasco and Inglewood, Cal. For several years he has ministered at Temple Methodist Church in Los Angeles. He is author of the world peace play, "Lest We Forget."

Minister of the First Congregational Church, Long Beach, Cal., since 1909, Rev. HENRY KENDALL BOOTH has long been a leader in social Christianity on the Pacific coast and in recent years has taken a prominent part in the campaign for international peace. Among his books are *The Great Galilean Returns, The Background of the Bible* and *The Bridge Between the Testaments.*

Rev. ORVA LEE ICE *is beginning his seven*th year as minister of the Wilkinsburg Baptist Church, Pittsburgh. Earlier pastorates were in Buffalo, Washington, D. C., New York city and Rochester, N. Y.

Receiving his B.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania and his B.D. from Newton Theological Institute, Rev. CHARLES LYON SEASHOLES was pastor of First Baptist Church, Watertown, Mass., 1923-30. During the last three years of this period he was a member of the homiletics seminar staff at Newton. Since 1931 he has ministered at First Baptist Church, Dayton, O. Mr. Seasholes has been a member of the board of managers of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society and chairman of the Commission on Social Action of the Northern Baptist Convention.

Having received his academic training at Colgate University, Rev. WARREN C. TAYLOR pursued theological studies at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. His earlier pastorates were in Frankfort, Owego and Albion, N. Y. He has been minister of Forest Avenue Baptist Church, Des Moines, Ia., since 1932. Mr. Taylor has served on numerous denominational boards, and is now president of the Des Moines Ministerial Union.

Rev. HENRY HITT CRANE *was ordained* in the Methodist ministry in 1916 and has held pastorates in Gorham, Me., Newton and Malden, Mass., and Scranton, Pa. He has recently become minister of the First Methodist Church in Ann Arbor, Mich. During the World War Mr. Crane was in Y. M. C. A. secretarial service in England and France.

Rev. DAVID NELSON BEACH *is minister* of the Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

Rev. JOHN A. MCAFEE *is minister of* New Providence Presbyterian Church, Maryville, Tenn.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

JAMES D. MORRISON, Central Baptist, Providence, R. I. "Poise in a World of Panic." Psalm 46:1-3—"God is our refuge and strength. . . . Therefore will we not fear, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea: though the waters thereof roar and be troubled: though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

WILLIAM E. PARK, North Presbyterian, Buffalo, N. Y. "Idle Piety." Matt. 5:13—"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?"

HOMER J. ARMSTRONG, Richmond Hill Baptist, New York city. "Residue Religion." Isa. 44:17—"And the residue thereof he maketh a God, he falleth down and worshipeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my God."

JOHN W. BRUSH, First Baptist, Waterville, Me. "Keep America Out of War." Mark 3:23—"How can Satan cast out Satan?"

HYDE PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN, Brooklyn, N. Y. "Keep an Ignorant Left Hand." Matt. 6:3—"When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know. . . ."

ALFRED S. NICKLESS, First Presbyterian, Davenport, Ia. "The Hushed Singing of the Exiles." Psalm 137:4—"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

B. C. TAYLOR, First Methodist, South, Homer, La. "The War of the Worlds." Eph. 6:12—"We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

WILLIAM R. HESSELL, Newport Community Church, Balboa, Cal. "The Miracle Mile." Matt. 5:41—"Whosoever shall compel thee to go with him one mile, go with him two."

A. THAD. PERSONS, Baptist, McCormick, S. C. "Food for a Hungry World." Mk. 16:15—"Go the whole world over, and proclaim the gospel." (Weymouth)

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

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Title of sermon

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Text used (write out the text)

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Name of minister

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Name of church

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Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

I CONFESS that the fiendish persecution of Jews in Germany awakens in me a mood which contradicts one of my most settled convictions and, in addition, arrests my congenital optimism. Pacifist that I have supposed myself to be, I solemnly say that I would be ready to go to war against Germany to save the Jews and to exorcise the demon which possesses the German people, if I thought war would accomplish these ends. But of course I know that military measures would only increase the suffering of the victims of German hate, and besides—and this is the terribly solemnizing reflection—we should not know how to deal with victory if we should win it! Aside from this, however, the Jewish problem comes nearer putting me in a mood of pessimism than any other issue which we Christians have to face. I do not see a solution, and I see no progress in modern civilization toward a solution. I can solve it for myself, easily, heartily, for I have pretty well slain the dragon of race prejudice in my own soul. This is not the place to discuss so complex a problem, and that is fortunate for me, as I hardly know what to say. But one thing we must not grow weary in doing, that is to make sure that this hatred does not find expression on our lips or lodgment in our hearts. For the rest, perhaps all we can say is that the demon which possesses Germany belongs to that kind of which our Lord said, It goeth not out save by prayer and fasting. I wonder what he meant by that?

Germany's Barbarism

The Book of the Month

A WORKING FAITH FOR THE WORLD. *By Hugh Vernon White. Harpers. $2.00.*

THERE is something reassuring in the fact that we have in one of our most responsible mission boards an administrator and secretary who is also a wise and profound thinker in the field of Christian theology. Dr. White represents perhaps the most liberal mission board in Protestantism, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and has himself come up to the contemporary scene by the route commonly called "liberalism." He is the author of *A Theology for Christian Missions,* which is having a wide influence in defining the essentials of the Christian faith in terms that set the missionary movement firmly on its feet—as against the wavering dilettantism in which many modern Christians have been caught. In his present book he is not dealing directly with missions, but with the faith which the whole world needs and which Christianity alone exemplifies. He claims that the preeminence of Christianity is disclosed in its doctrine of man. Every religious and humanitarian proposal from Buddhism to communism and fascism is challenged by the question: What is its conception of man? The answer of science—that man is the last and highest term in the evolutionary process—is not adequate. The answer of the totalitarian states is not adequate. Nor is the answer of any of the world's religions adequate, save that of Christianity, which regards man as the veritable child of God, made in God's image. Thus Dr. White finds himself at once plunged into theology. And he moves about in the whole field of theology with an ease, a facility and a lucidity of expression which makes the reading of his book a rare delight. I am left at the end with a sense of astonishment at the wide extent of ground he has covered, and so easily and comfortably that I was not aware until the end that we had ventured so far and so deeply into the real issues of our time. Put Dr. White down as one of the best interpreters of the Christian faith which the American church possesses.

A Thought for the Month

CONSIDER the popular mentality which the gospel confronts in our time. It is a different mentality from that of our grandfathers' time. I would call it a sensation saturated mentality. Ours is a generation which lives in its sensations, far more than in ideas. It has almost forgotten how to think. We have only to consider the mass of stimuli with which we are bombarded—by radio, movie, billboard, newspaper advertising and the newspaper headline—to realize how the human mind is swamped with sensation, leaving little margin for reflective thought. Modern life, with its quick movement from place to place, from scene to scene, from engagement to engagement, is largely a life of sensation. The mind is given more than it can digest. It loses its power of reflective response and becomes a passive receptacle of sensations. Our economic system tends to reduce the human worker to the mechanical level. He works at a bare fragment of the whole productive process; his task requires the minimum of intelligence, and practically no imaginative share in the ends for which the work is done. His efficiency is determined by his skill in merely catching the rhythm of the machine and moving with it. His physical body thus becomes a part of the machine. That is to say, his work tends to involve only his sensations, and to make his mind almost irrelevant. This is the dominant mentality to which we preach the gospel in our time. It reacts upon our preaching and degrades and trivializes it. We must struggle against this mentality in others and in ourselves, remembering always that while this generation is peculiarly difficult to reach with any message which comes to it in the name of "truth," it is the only generation to which we are called to present the gospel, and we must not faint in our effort to find access to it.

The Mind of Our Time

Charles Clayton Morrison

One minister
plus
Ten informed laymen
equals
Achievement

The same minister
plus
Ten groping laymen
equals
Frustration

Here is the simple mathematics of successful preaching, as many an experienced preacher can testify. And the surest way to leaven any congregation with "informed" laymen is to start a group of your laymen reading

THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY

An Undenominational Journal of Religion

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

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